

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, favorable reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. By this Amendment, claims 14-24 and 43 are amended solely for clarity. Thus, claims 1-46 are pending for further examination.

Claims 1-35 and 45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Itou (U.S. Patent No. 6,439,998) in view of Nakatani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,720,663) and Okita et al. (U.S. Patent 6,422,945), claims 36-37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Itou in view of Nakatani and Suzuki (U.S. Patent No. 5,592,609), and claims 38-44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Itou in view of Nakatani and Komoto (U.S. Patent No. 6,273,814). These rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 previously was amended to recite “one or more second storage locations for storing, for a plurality of enemies, one or more operation timing patterns indicating the optimal timing and consequence of one or more sequential player inputs to be input in association with the corresponding enemy.” The Office Action indicates that an expansive interpretation has been assigned to the terms “optimal timing” and “consequence.” In that regard, the Office Action appears to be stuck on the idea of Itou’s waiting time mode and action time mode. But as Applicant has explained in numerous previous Responses, these modes of Itou amount to nothing more than the taking of turns in connection with a game. From the outset, then, this rejection is dubious because they really Itou’s modes are not operation timing patterns indicating the optimal timing and consequence of one or more sequential player inputs -- at least not in the manner that those terms are explained in the instant application. Furthermore, see claim 24, which does specifically contemplate the taking of turns.

It appears now that the Office Action is indicating that the “consequences” really are whether a game character can be attacked based on the waiting time. *See, e.g.*, page 2 and the paragraph bridging pages 25 and 26. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this interpretation. Again, see claim 24, which clearly contemplates the difference between taking turns and optimal timing patters, etc. Of course, even if this interpretation were adopted, it still seems inapplicable to the language of the independent claims. For instance, claim 1 indicates that the operation timing patterns indicate the optimal timing and consequence of one or more sequential player inputs to be input in association with a corresponding enemy. Claim 1, for example, therefore makes clear that the optimal timing and consequence together pertain to one or more sequential player inputs. They do not pertain to the operation timing patterns if the operation timing patterns are merely interpreted to be binary on/off decisions as to whether inputs are to be accepted or not accepted. If the operation timing patterns simply correspond to whether it is a particular player’s turn to act as alleged in the Office Action, then the operation timing pattern only indicates whether a player input will be input at all. It would not indicate both the optimal timing and the consequence of one or more sequential player inputs that are to be input in association with a corresponding enemy. In other words, if the Office Action’s interpretation is accepted, then operation timing patterns only indicate whether a particular player can do something, not the optimal timing and consequence of that player actually inputting sequential inputs.

The other features do not cure the fundamental misinterpretation of Itou’s teachings, nor would the alleged combinations have resulted in arrangements like those called for in the independent claims. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections are respectfully requested.

ITOI et al.

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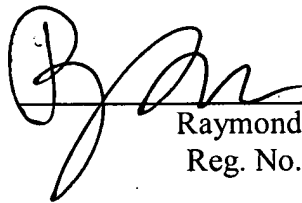
In addition, as far as Applicant can tell, no likelihood values are taught or suggested in the cited references. Thus, the rejection of claims 45-46 also is improper.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this application, or deem that any formalities need to be addressed prior to allowance, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the phone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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